

Senior Airman Nathan was a 2004 graduate of Central High School in Macon, Georgia. His strong sense of patriotism, honor, and commitment to excellence led him to proudly enlist in the United States Air Force. He planned to resume his studies at Fort Valley State College and University, where he pursued a degree in Criminal Justice prior to his enlistment in 2005.

Madam Speaker, on June 1, 2008, the 48th Fighter Wing dedicated a Vehicle Entry Gate at RAF Lakenheath in honor of Senior Airman Nathan. The plaque which commemorated the event reads, "This gate is memorialized in the name of Senior Airman Jason D. Nathan who was assigned to the 48th Security Squadron, 48th Fighter Wing, RAF Lakenheath, England. Senior Airman Nathan was mortally wounded by an improvised explosive device on 23 June 2007 while on a combat patrol in Tikrit, Iraq in support of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. He gave his life providing courageous support to his squad while protecting the people of Iraq in their pursuit of freedom from oppression and terror. Senior Airman Nathan's heroic actions and unselfish dedication upheld the highest traditions of the Security Forces career field and the United States Air Force." Senior Airman Nathan was also honored at ceremonies in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

Senior Airman Nathan's selfless service to his country, his willingness to pay the ultimate sacrifice so that all of us can enjoy the fruits of liberty, his desire to see the Iraqi people live in a free and democratic society, are all attributes of an outstanding young American to whom we all owe a great debt of gratitude and respect.

Madam Speaker, I am confident my colleagues will join me in recognizing the heroism, patriotism and fidelity of Senior Airman Jason Dorian Nathan.

ON THE PASSING OF THEO BAARS, JR.

HON. JEFF MILLER

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 19, 2008

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Madam Speaker, it is with great sadness that I rise today to recognize the passing of Theo Baars, Jr. Over several decades, Theo helped shape the Pensacola community and contributed greatly to making this area a great place for people to live and work.

During the 1960s, 1970s and beyond, Theo played a great role in bringing some important businesses and services to the Pensacola area, located in my district in Northwest Florida. Through his active work in the real estate community, several buildings that are now considered landmarks were built, including Sacred Heart Hospital and Pensacola Junior College. Theo was instrumental in locating these two landmarks and numerous other buildings in areas where they would serve the greatest amount of people.

Theo's projects not only benefitted great numbers of people but also the community as a whole. From health care to higher learning to consumer goods to state parks, he made sure that development was not done for the sake of development, but to directly benefit those living and working in the area. His dedi-

cation to the community's well-being extended into his involvement with several civic organizations as well, including the Pensacola Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, the National Naval Aviation Museum and his role as a founding member of Junior Achievement.

Madam Speaker, Northwest Florida will long remember the legacy of Theo Baars, Jr. His influence in the area will not only be seen but also felt on a daily basis as people travel through the area. My thoughts and prayers are with Marge, his wife of 30 years, and all his family. We will miss this man who helped make our world a better place.

RECOGNIZING IAN GIBSON OF VIRGINIA BEACH

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 19, 2008

Mrs. DRAKE. Madam Speaker, I rise to recognize the outstanding achievements of Ian Gibson of Virginia Beach, and to commend him on becoming a Congressional Award Gold Medalist. This recognition by the United States Congress is the highest honor bestowed upon America's youth. It serves as a testament to Ian's strength of character and commitment to our national values of dedication to public service and the cherished qualities of personal growth, initiative, and achievement, all of which are cornerstones of the Congressional Award.

Ian's volunteer efforts are tremendous, speaking very highly of him and his level of commitment to the community and to public service. Ian completed over 600 hours of Voluntary Public Service and earned the rank of Eagle Scout, working with Strawbridge Elementary School to provide school supplies to orphans in Bolivia and Russia, and 25 local children. In addition, he continues to be active within the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Tidewater Council, serving as Junior Assistant BSA Tidewater Council Venturing Leadership Award, and participating in the 2007 National OA Leadership and Conservation Summit at Indiana University.

Ian has devoted time and energy to excellence in the sports of baseball and football, honing his speed and endurance, and earning a selection as First Colonial High School's "Male Student Athlete of the Week." By maintaining his own physical well-being, he has balanced the challenges of public service with his own personal welfare and developed a well-rounded persona.

Ian has become a role model, not only for those young cub scouts he assists and tee-ball players he coaches, but also for the large community around him. Upon receiving the Congressional Medal, he joins a most elite group of our nation's youth who have set and achieved this very commendable goal. I am certain Ian's incredible accomplishments, dedication to service, and evident leadership talents will continue to speak highly of him, as they do now.

HONORING PADMA VELIGATI

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 19, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Padma Veligati of St. Joseph, Missouri. Padma is active in the community through work and in her spare time and she has been chosen to receive the YWCA Women of Excellence Award for Woman in Volunteerism.

When asked what Padma Veligati gives back to her community through volunteerism, answers vary, but the themes are the same. She is compassionate, committed, and her focus is always on those she serves. Padma has spent one day off each month for the past three years volunteering at the city's Social Service Board whose mission is to serve the health needs of those in poverty, lacking health insurance and not covered by Medicare or Medicaid. She takes on the most difficult gynecological cases, and her colleagues say that she has saved the lives of many women. Having grown up in a third-world country, Padma feels strongly about the lack of availability of medical services to certain segments of the population, especially considering how wealthy our nation is compared to the rest of the world.

Padma was recently admitted into the Masters in Public Health program at the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. While Padma will have to give up volunteering in the short-term in order to balance her studies and a busy OB/GYN practice, her new degree will help her achieve her goal of working in international public health and impacting even more women in need.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in recognizing Padma Veligati. She has made an amazing impact on countless individuals in the St. Joseph Community. I am honored to represent her in the United States Congress.

IN ANTICIPATION OF VIETNAMESE PRIME MINISTER NGUYEN'S OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE U.S.

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 19, 2008

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, next Tuesday, Vietnamese Prime Minister Nguyen will visit the White House. I sincerely hope that the President will seize this opportunity to be bold and make Vietnam's deplorable human rights record a point of focus. Any further cooperation between the U.S. and Vietnam should be contingent upon establishing benchmarks for improved human rights and increased religious freedom in Vietnam.

Vietnam's human rights record remains a disgrace despite its ascension to the World Trade Organization—a move that many believed would help liberalize the political as well as the economic situation. The citizens of Vietnam today remain unable to change their government. Last November, the government arrested and imprisoned two Vietnamese citizens and three foreign citizens for preparing